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The next following issues of *The Journal of Germanic Philology* will contain contributions by Professors Ph. S. Allen, Chicago Univ.; N. O. Brooks, Ill. Univ.; A. S. Cook, Yale; W. A. Cooper, Marietta Coll.; O. F. Emerson, West. Res. Univ.; L. Fessler, Neb. Univ.; K. Francke, Harvard; P. Groh, N. Y.; P. Grummann, Indianapolis; M. A. Harris, Rockford Coll.; G. Hempf, Mich. Univ.; E. Jack, Lake Forest; H. Jantzen, Breslau; G. E. Karsten, Ind. Univ.; H. S. Kip, Stanford Univ.; F. Klaeber, Minn. Univ.; C. v. Klenze, Chic. Univ.; W. Karstmeier, Johns Hopkins; E. Leser, Ind. Univ.; C. M. Lewis, Yale; J. M. Manly, Chicago Univ.; G. H. McKnight, Ohio Univ.; W. E. Mead, Middletown, Conn.; C. Osthaus, Ind. Univ.; F. Panzer, Freiburg Univ.; E. C. Rooder, Mich. Univ.; M. W. Sampson, Ind. Univ.; Ph. Seiberth, Ind. Univ.; O. P. Seward, Utah Univ.; M. H. Shackford, Yale; B. J. Wheeler, Cal. Univ.

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THE HUSBAND'S MESSAGE AND THE ACCOMPANYING RIDDLES OF THE EXETER BOOK.

IN his edition of the Exeter Codex (1842), Thorpe printed on pp. 470-475 four short pieces, the first three under the heading 'Riddles,' the fourth with the title 'A Fragment.' Ettmüller in his *Scopas and Boceras* (1850) reprinted the second and fourth, putting the former among his riddles and giving to Thorpe's 'Fragment' the title 'Vreccan þeodnes ærend to his bryde.' Grein in his *Bibliothek* (1857-8) reprinted the first and second with the other riddles, numbering them 31 and 61, but joined the third and fourth into one, to which he gave a title essentially the same as Ettmüller's, 'Botschaft des Gemahls an seine Frau.' Wülker and Assmann in their revision of Grein make no change, and his arrangement seems to have been accepted by all.

The purpose of the present paper is to suggest reasons for thinking that the second piece, like the third, is not a riddle but part of a poem which is continued in what follows in the MS., and that the copyist probably supposed that the same was the case with the first one also. The MS. here as in other places gives us no help and the arrangement of these four pieces of Thorpe must be based on a study of the subject matter.

The first piece (9 verses) is without doubt a riddle, as Thorpe supposed. This is shown not only by the character of the thought and by the form, but also by the circumstance, which seems to have escaped Thorpe's notice but was pointed out by Grein, that it is found also in the midst of the first series of riddles in the MS. (p. 412 of Thorpe's edition). The only solutions that I have seen are 'Regenwasser' (Dietrich) and 'Das Æhrenfeld' (Trautmann), both of which, I feel sure, are incorrect. I cannot see how several of the statements about the object

to be guessed can properly be applied to either of these. Another solution will be offered later.

The following seventeen verses (Thorpe's second piece, Grein's Riddle 61), so far as I have been able to learn, have always been regarded as a riddle and are published as one without comment in the latest edition by Assmann. Two solutions have been offered, 'Die Rohrflöte' (Dietrich) and 'Der Runenstab' (Trautmann). But the riddle form is not distinct here as in the preceding piece, and though we have a number of descriptive statements of the kind found in riddles, we do not find the apparent contradictions that are meant to puzzle the hearer and are the essential characteristics of riddles of this form. In this respect the piece differs radically from the preceding one. Moreover, the statements in it do not suit the solutions offered, though Trautmann's answers to them in part. The object that speaks is plainly a *letter*, Old English 'beam,' i. e. a slip of wood on which a message has been carved. But what follows in the MS. is also the utterance of a letter, which is represented as delivering its errand as a living messenger might do; and when we read the whole as a single poem, we find a consecutive-ness and unity so clear that it is matter for surprise that Grein did not notice it and include the second piece as well as the third in his 'Husband's Message.' The 'beam,' which takes the part of a messenger, first introduces itself, as any other might do. This is done in a description of its former life and growth as a tree and of the work of the hand and knife that shaped it to a letter, with a reflection on the marvelous fact that a dumb piece of wood should thus be enabled to speak and convey a message. This introduction contains seventeen verses and is the part published by Grein and Assmann as Riddle 61 (Thorpe's second piece). Then follows an assurance of the faithfulness of the banished writer of the letter, twelve verses (Thorpe's third piece), and after this the message proper, thirty-six verses, in which he prays his lady to join him in his new home beyond the sea. In

the five remaining verses the messenger repeats the assurance of the faithfulness of his lord to the pledge made long before and gives a proof of the genuineness of his mission in a secret cipher or pass-word, as I conjecture. Such at least may be the purpose of the inserted runes, which still wait for an explanation. The three topics of the message easily explain Thorpe's division into three parts, and the analysis here given makes the connection plain and gives reason for regarding the whole as a single poem.

A careful reading of the whole, moreover, raises some doubt of the appositeness of Grein's title.¹ There is not a single expression in it to show that the writer is a husband and it is more natural and more poetical to picture him as a wooer. We may imagine a situation like that of some of the mediæval romances (e. g. *King Horn*), in which a young knight, banished for presuming to fall in love with the daughter of his prince, gains fame and fortune in another land and sends back to his lady a message that assures her of his faithfulness and instructs her how to join him. The phrases 'nyde gebæded,' 'forþsiðes georn,' 'wean oferwunnen' exactly suit such an enforced departure, and the title given to the lady, 'þeodnes dohtor,' is in keeping with such a situation. Equally suggestive of a romance is the tone of secrecy in 'swa hit beorna ma uncre wordcwidas ne mænden,' in 'ic onsun-dran þe secgan wille,' in the poetical way of fixing the date of departure by the first call of the cuckoo in the spring, and in the mysterious cipher at the end. I venture to suggest as a fitting title 'A Love-letter.'

But if Thorpe's second piece as well as the third be joined with what follows, how are we to explain the repetition of Riddle 31? The scribe of the Exeter Book probably did not take it from the same source as in the case of its previous insertion, for the variations of the text are too numerous, to say nothing of the improbability of a second copy made intentionally, or of the insertion of a

¹ Also of Ettmüller's, if by *bryde* he means 'wife.'

single riddle by itself. It seems likely that he copied here from a manuscript in which the riddle had been joined to the poem on the supposition that it belonged with it, and in its solution is found an explanation of this mistake of some former scribe. As said above, the solutions hitherto offered are entirely unsuited to certain statements in the riddle about the object to be guessed. A storm of rain might no doubt say of itself, 'I sport with the breeze,' 'I am the fellow of the storm,' but how could it add 'I am consumed by fire,' 'I am a burning coal'? Or in what sense is a field of grain 'ready to go on a journey' and how can it be supposed to say 'when I am lifted up, the proud bow before me'? The true solution, I think, is 'an beam,' in the various senses that the word carries in Old English, *tree, log, ship* and *cross*.¹ As both the riddle and the letter are represented as uttered by a 'beam,' it is probable that some one took the whole for a single composition and wrote it out as such. If then the scribe of the Exeter manuscript found it thus in some other manuscript than that of the riddles, it is not strange that he copied it here and thus unwittingly repeated the riddle.

The value of the theory here proposed can best be judged by reading the whole consecutively. Unfortunately such reading is seriously hindered by the condition of the manuscript, which in two places is to a great extent illegible. These places, however, are in the riddle and in the third and fourth pieces, not at the points of division, and therefore contain nothing that bears on the theory here propounded, that the second piece should be joined with what follows, and that the scribe supposed that the same was true of the first. They only prevent us from reading the whole in order and observing its unity. To enable one to do so, I add the text of the whole with a translation into modern English, filling the gaps by con-

¹ Probably also *harp* and *bowl*. See supplementary note.

jecture.¹ The defects in the riddle are supplied from the first copy in the MS., but I have kept the forms of the second even where the alternative reading seems preferable, because my purpose is to give the whole approximately in the form in which, as I assume, it stood in the manuscript from which the scribe of the Exeter Book took it. For other defective places I have made use of the conjectures of others when they seemed suitable, but have given special attention to the choice of words that fill the gaps according to the measurements of Schipper² and Wülker.³ It is of course understood that a conjecture must not violate established metrical laws and must furnish a satisfactory sense. But where so much is lacking the number of possible variations is great and many of the suggestions offered may perhaps be replaced by better ones. Their purpose is so to connect the portions that have survived as to give continuous sense and to illustrate the thesis that we have in these three pieces a single poem.⁴

¹ Changes of the MS. reading are in *italics*; where the MS. shows no gap, the addition required by metre or sense is in *brackets*; gaps are filled by *italics in brackets*.

² In *Germania*, xix, 335 ff.

³ In *Anglia*, ii, 381 ff.

⁴ The translation is made chiefly with the purpose mentioned above, to show the connection of the three parts as published by Thorpe. No attempt at literal exactness is made, only absolute fidelity to the thought of each sentence.

TEXT.

ic eom licbysig, lace mid winde,
w[unden mid wuldre, we]dre gesomnad
fus forðweges, fyre gemylted,
[bearu] blowende, byrnende gled.
5 ful oft mec gesiþas sendað æfter hondū,
þær mec weras 7 wif wlonce gecyssað.
þoñ ic mec onhæbbe hi onhnigað to me,
modge miltsum; swa ic mongum sceal
ycan upcyme eadignesne.

ic wæs be sonde sæwealle neah,
æt merefaroþe minum gewunade
frumstaþole fæst; fea ænig wæs
monna cynnes þæt minne þær
5 on anæde eard beheolde,
ac mec uhtna gehwam yð sio brune
lagufæðme beleolc. lyt ic wende
þæt ic ær oþþe sið æfre sceolde
ofer meodu[drincende] muðleas spreca,
10 wordum wrixlan. þæt is wundres dæl,
on sefan searolic þā þe swylc ne conn,
hu mec seaxes ord 7 seo swiþre hond,
eorles ingeþonc 7 ord somod,
þingum geþydan þæt ic wiþ þe sceolde

The bracketed words in vv. 2 and 4 of the riddle are taken from the other copy in the Exeter Book.

1. MS. lig bysig; all edd. lic bysig.

1. T. E. G.-sande. — T. sæ wealle. — 5. E. anede.

9. No gap in MS. The amendment is Grein's, adopted by Assmann.

12. MS. seaxeð, Thorpe's correction.

TRANSLATION.

The Riddle.

I am agile of body, I sport with the breeze; (*tree*)

I am clothed with beauty, a comrade of the storm ;

(tree)

I am bound on a journey, consumed by fire; (*ship*,

tree)

A blooming grove, a burning gleed. (*tree, log*)

5 Full often comrades pass me from hand to hand.

(harp)

Where stately men and women kiss me. (*cup?*)

When I rise up, before me bow

The proud with reverence. Thus it is my part

To increase for many the growth of happiness.

(*the cross*)

The letter.

My home was on the beach near the sea-shore ;

Beside the ocean's brim I dwelt, fast fixed

In my first abode. Few of mankind there were

That there beheld my home in the solitude,

5 But every morn the brown wave encircled me

With its watery embrace. Little weened I then

That I should ever, earlier or later,

Though mouthless, speak among the mead-drinkers

And utter words. A great marvel it is,

10 Strange in the mind that knoweth it not,

How the point of the knife and the right hand,

The thought of a man, and his blade therewith,

Shaped me with skill, that boldly I might

So deliver a message to thee

Verses 5 and 6 of the Riddle offer the only difficulty of interpretation, See the supplementary note. — 8. The meaning here given to 'sceal' is not clearly recognized in the OE. lexicons, but it is very frequent.

r-6. The location of the tree from which the wood for the letter was taken suggests a particular kind of wood suitable for the purpose, perhaps willow or swamp cedar.

- 15 for unc anum twam ærendspræce
 abeodan bealdlice, swa hit beorna ma
 uncre wordcwidas widdor ne mænden.
 nu ic onsundran þe secgan wille
 [þæt of] treocyn[nes] ic tudre aweox.
 20 in mec æld[a cræft] sceal ellor londes
 settan [searostafas. þoñ] sealte strea[mas
 oferfare ic on yphuse], ful oft ic on bates
 [laguscipes locan land] gesohte,
 þær mec mondrihten min [onsende,
 25 o]ferheah hofu. eom nu her cumen.
 on ceolþele, 7 nu cunnan scealt
 hu þu ymb modlufan mines frean
 on hyge hycge; ic gehatan dear
 þæt þu þær tirlæste treowe findest.
 30 hwæt þec þoñ biddan het, se þisne beam agrof,
 þæt þu, sinchroden, sylf gemunde
 on gewitlocan wordbeotunga
 þe git on ærdagum oft gespræcon,
 þenden git moston on meoduburgum
 35 eard weardigan, an lond bugan,
 freondscipe fremman. hine fæhþo adraf
 of sigeþeode. heht nu sylfa þe
 lustum læran þæt þu lagu drefde,
 siþþan þu gehyrde on hliþes oran
 40 galan geomorne geac on bearwe.

15. MS. twan, Thorpe's correction. 17. E. widor — G. mændon. 18-25. Grein's reconstruction of this passage is

Nu ic onsundran þe secgan ville
 [ymb] treo-cynn. Ic tudre aveox
 eall ellor londes.
 set[te siðfat ofer] sealte strea[mas].
 Ful oft ic on bates [bosme] sohte,
 þær mec mondryhten min [onsende],
 heah hofu; eom nu her cumen

The amendment to strea[mas] had been already made by Thorpe. Ettmüller simply reprints Thorpe's text. Wülker adopts Thorpe's correction to streamas and Grein's ymb, but leaves the rest unamended. The later examination of the MS. by Schipper and himself had shown that most of Grein's amendments were not suited to the space to be filled, and had moreover resulted in the finding of words and letters not given by Thorpe, on whose edition Grein had based his text. 38. MS. læram, Thorpe's correction.

- 15 In the presence of us two alone,
That to other men our talk
May not make it more widely known.
Now to thee will I tell apart
That I sprang from the stock of the tree-race.
- 20 In other lands the skill of man is wont
To set on me cunning characters.
Then in a vessel I traverse the salt waves;
Oft in the prison of a ship have I visited lands,
Where my lord has sent me,
- 25 And lofty castles. Now am I come hither
In the keeled vessel, and now shalt thou know
How thou mayest think in thy heart
Of the love of my lord. I dare maintain
That there thou wilt find true loyalty.
- 30 Lo! he that carved this stave bade me
Pray thee, O jewel-decked, to remember
In thy heart the word-pledges,
Which in days of yore ye two oft spake,
While in the mead-castles ye were permitted
- 35 To have a home, to dwell in the same land,
To practice friendship. Force drove him
Out of the land. Now hath he bidden me
Earnestly to urge thee to sail the sea
When thou hast heard on the brow of the hill
- 40 The mournful cuckoo call in the wood.

20. The use of 'sceal' to give the force of a frequentative verb is by no means rare, though not recognized by the dictionaries.

35. I take 'an land' to be *one* land, the same country. — 36. To practise friendship, i. e. be lovers, as often.

- ne læt þu þec siþþan siþes getwæfan
 lade gelettan, lifgendne monn.
 ONgin mere secan, mæwes eþel;
 onsite sænacan þæt þu suð heonan
 45 ofer merelade monnan findest,
 þær se þeoden is þin on wenum.
 ne mæg him worulde willa [gelimpan]
 mara on gemyndum, þæs þe he me sægde,
 þoñ inc geunne alwaldend god
 50 [þæt git] ætsomne siþþan moton
 secgum 7 gesiþum s[*inc ut agifan*,
n] æglede beagas; he genoh hafað
 feðan go[*ldes*, *feos* 7 *hringa*,
þa he mi] d elþeode eþel healde,
 55 fægre folda[*n*. *fela him þær gehyrað*
hear] ra hæleþa, þeah þe her min wine[*dryhten*,
wræcca] nyde gebæded, nacan ut aþrong,
 7 on yþa geong [i]rnan] sceolde,
 faran on flotweg, forðsiþes georn,
 60 menga merestreamas. nu se mon hafað
 wean oferwunnen; nis him wilna gad
 ne meara ne maðma ne meododreama,
 ænges ofer eorþan eorlgestreona,
 þeodnes dohtor, gif he þin beneah
 65 ofer eald gebeot incer twega.
 gecyre ic ætsomne S R geador
 EA W 7 M aþe benemnan,
 þæt he þa wære 7 þa winetreowe
 be him lifgendum læstan wolde,
 70 þe git on ærdagum oft gespræcon

47. Two letters erased before worulde. Ettmüller and Wülker insert, on; Grein, to. —No gap after willa; Grein's addition. Ettmüller amends willa mara/beon on gemyndum. 50. Grein, [þæt git] ætsomme. 51. Grein, [sinc brytnian]. 52. Thorpe, ætlede; Ettmüller, æplede; Grein, Wülker, næglede. Grein, [feohgestreona] fættan go[ldes, Wülker, fættan goldes 54. Grein, [þeah he on] elþeode, Wülker, d elþeode. 55. Thorpe, Ettmüller, foldan; Grein, foldan, [him fela þegnialð]; Wülker, folda. 56. Thorpe, Ettmüller, Wülker, ra, Grein, [wlanc]ra. Thorpe, Ettmüller, w ; Grein, w[inedryhten]; Wülker, wine. 58. Thorpe, on yþa gong sceolde ; Ettmüller, on yða gong ana sceolde; Grein, on yða begong [ana] sceolde; Wülker, on yþa geong sceolde. 67. All that have examined the MS. agree that it is impossible to decide whether the last rune is M or D. 70. All editors amend to gespræcon.

- Then let no living man keep thee
 From the journey or hinder thy going.
 Betake thee to the sea, the home of the mew ;
 Seat thee in the boat, that southward from here
 45 Beyond the road of the sea thou mayest find the man
 Where waits thy prince in hope of thee.
 No joy of the world can be greater for him
 In his thoughts, as he hath told me,
 Than that the all-ruling God should grant you
 50 That ye together should hereafter
 Give out treasure to men and comrades,
 Golden rings. Enough he hath
 Of beaten gold, of wealth and treasure,
 Since among strangers he hath a home,
 55 A fair abode: there obey him many
 Noble warriors, though here my banished lord,
 Driven by necessity, pushed out his boat
 And on the path of the waves was forced to run,
 To journey on the water-way, eager for escape,
 60 To stir the waves. Now hath the man
 Overcome his trouble; he hath no lack of pleasures,
 Of steeds or of jewels, or of mead-joys,
 Or of any treasure on earth,
 O prince's daughter, if he have thee
 65 In spite of the old threat against you both.
 I put together S R
 EA W and M(D?), to assure thee with an oath
 That while he lives he will fulfil
 The pledge and the love-troth
 70 That in days of old ye often spake.

43, 44. The direction implies that the absent lover will have a ship ready there at the date set.

47. i. e. he can think of no greater joy. — 53. The meaning of *fēdan* can only be guessed. Probably it is an error of the scribe; the translation is suggested by Grein's correction.

66, 67. It is impossible to find a satisfactory meaning in these two verses, until some clue to the meaning of the runes has been discovered. It will be noticed that they spell *SWEARM* or *SWEARD*, a Northumbrian form of *sweord*, "sword."

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

The solution offered in this paper for Riddle 31 suits every statement in it perfectly, except those of vv. 5 and 6, which are not so clear. For these I was at first inclined to the meaning *trumpet*, basing this explanation on the phrase 'mid beam' in the Northumbrian *Math.* xxiv. 31, where the WS. version has 'mid byman.' As the riddles were presumably composed in Northumbrian, the form 'beam' in this passage may be accepted as evidence that in that dialect the two words 'beam' and 'beme' were confused, at least to such an extent as to allow of their interchange in a punning riddle. But more careful examination of the matter has led me to suggest for v. 5 the meaning *harp* and for 6, *cup*. The former will be only a special use of 'beam' in the sense of 'gleo-beam,' and the statement that comrades pass the harp from hand to hand is illustrated by the well-known Cædmon story. The statement that this is done where men and women kiss the cup means no more than 'at the feast,' and is illustrated by the description of the feast in the *Beowulf*. The same expression, 'hwilum weras cyssað,' is used of a drinking-horn in Riddle 15.

Analogies for the use of 'beam' in the special sense of 'gleo-beam' are so plentiful that no one will probably object to this part of the interpretation, but no dictionary recognizes a meaning *cup* for either 'beam' or 'byme.' The *New. Engl. Dict.* says that *byme* is 'of doubtful origin,' but it is a derivative of 'beam,' the Teutonic stem-form being *baum-jōn*, and means a 'wooden instrument' of some kind or other. (Kluge, *Stammsbildungslehre*, 81.) In the sense of *trumpet* it was no doubt first used of a wooden trumpet, like the Alpine horn of to-day; the extension of meaning to trumpets in general is exactly parallel to that of *horn*. Kluge gives, moreover, several instances of derivatives in *-jōn* that have the same meaning as the primitive (*Stamm.* 83), and a natural result of this confusion of two words once distinct in application would be the use of the primitive in the sense of the derivative. Such

cases in English are the modern *irons* and *coppers*, and the OE. 'æsc' for *ship* and *spear*, or 'bōc' for *book*, as well as of 'beam' for various articles made of wood. It is not impossible that 'beam,' in addition to its use to denote a *ship*, *trumpet*, *letter*, etc. may also have meant *cup*, originally a wooden bowl, like Virgil's 'pocula fagina,' which as the expression 'necdum illis labra admovi' shows were meant for drinking, but had not yet been 'kissed.' All who are familiar with the various dictionaries of Old English and their deficiencies, will agree, I am sure, that the lack of a word or a meaning in them is not a conclusive proof of its non-existence.

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